

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AGR-05 EB-07 AID-05 OES-03 HEW-02

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P 161415Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9259

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 7905

DEPT PASS USDA/ARS FOR HAINES

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, TBIO, IN, US

SUBJ: PROJECT ON BIOLOGICAL CONTROL OF CROP PESTS

1. THE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE HAS FOR SOME TIME HAD UNDER DISCUSSION WITH THE INDIAN COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH A PROJECT ON BIOLOGICAL CONTROL OF CROP PESTS. THE PROJECT WOULD CALL FOR BOTH LABORATORY AND FIELD RESEARCH IN THE CONTROL OF PESTS BY USE OF THEIR NATURAL ENEMIES--PARASITES, PREDATORS AND PATHOGENS OF PESTS. THE GOI HAS COMPLETED ITS SCREENING PROCESS CONCERNING THIS PROJECT AND HAS ASKED THE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE FOR ITS SUPPORT. THAT SERVICE WOULD LIKE TO COMMIT THE SUM OF \$829,000 TO THE PROJECT BY THE END OF THIS FISCAL YEAR.

2. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROCEDURE WHICH I HAVE ESTABLISHED IN THE EMBASSY, THE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE HAS SOUGHT MY APPROVAL TO PROCEED TO A FORMAL AGREEMENT FORTHWITH. I AM RELUCTANT TO GIVE APPROVAL WITHOUT ASSURANCE THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA WILL DEFEND US-INDIA COOPERATION IN THIS PROJECT SHOULD IT BECOME SUBJECT TO CRITICISM. I OF COURSE AM MINDFUL OF THE CURRENT CONTROVERSY REGARDING OUR COOPERATION WITH WHO AND THE GOI ON RESEARCH CONCERNING THE BIOLOGICAL CONTROL OF MOSQUITOS.

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3. THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN EXAMINING TWO OPTIONS FOR HANDLING THIS. ACCORDING TO THE FIRST, WE WOULD WRITE TO MEA, EXPLAIN THE STATUS OF THE PROJECT AND SAY THAT IN VIEW OF CONTROVERSY CONCERNING A SIMILAR PROJECT WE WOULD LIKE TO BE INFORMED BY THE MINISTRY WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA WISHES US TO PROCEED. A POSITIVE RESPONSE, IF IT WERE FORTHCOMING, WOULD GIVE US REASON TO EXPECT SUPPORT FROM THE POLITICAL LEVEL OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA SHOULD A CONTROVERSY DEVELOP. I BELIEVE THE DECISION ON OUR QUERY WOULD BE A VERY DIFFICULT ONE FOR THE MINISTRY TO MAKE.

4. THE SECOND ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE FOR ME TO INSTRUCT THE HEAD OF THE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE HERE TO INFORM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE INDIAN COUNCIL ON AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH THAT WE ARE UNABLE TO PROCEED WITH THIS NEW PROJECT ON THE BIOLOGICAL CONTROL OF INSECTS UNTIL WE KNOW MORE ABOUT THE POSITION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ON THE MOSQUITO PROJECT. I WOULD ALSO FIND AN OPPORTUNITY TO ASSURE THAT MEA WAS AWARE OF THIS POSITION.

5. I RECOMMEND THE SECOND OPTION. SELECTING IT WOULD MEAN THERE WOULD BE NO CHANCE OF COMMITTING AGRICULTURE'S FUNDS BY THE END OF THE YEAR, BUT I DOUBT THAT THE FIRST OPTION WOULD GIVE US MUCH CHANCE OF THIS EITHER. HE AND I CERTAINLY DO NOT BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD PROCEED WITH THIS PROJECT WITHOUT SOME PRELIMINARY STEP TO ASSURE THAT WE WILL BE ADEQUATELY PROTECTED FROM CRITICISM.

6. WOULD APPRECIATE GUIDANCE ON THIS.
SCHNEIDER

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